

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SSM-03 ACDA-07
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R 291304Z JAN 77
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1515
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
DIA WASHDC
USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 0643

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, SY
SUBJECT: INDICATIONS OF CONTINUED ALAWITE UNREST

1. SUMMARY: 100 ALAWITES REPORTEDLY DISMISSED RECENTLY FROM LATAKIA BRANCH OF BAATH PARTY FOR OPPOSITION TO PRES. ASAD. ALAWITE FORMER SECURITY CHIEF OF ALEPPO REFUSING TO ACCEPT RE-ASSIGNMENT ABROAD BY ASAD. INTERROGATION OF SUSPECTS IN RAIQ NUQQARI'S SECRET MILITARY ORGANIZATION HALTED BY PRES. SEVERAL WEEKS AGO. BP REGIONAL COMMAND REPORTEDLY DISCUSSED NUQQARI AFFAIR RECENTLY AND APPROVED RELEASE OF MANY SUSPECTS FROM DETENTION. END SUMMARY.

2. RELIABLE LOCAL DISSIDENT SOURCE HAS PROVIDED SUMMARY OF RECENT INTERNAL INCIDENTS WHICH HE PERCEIVES AS SIGNIFICANT INDICATIONS OF PRES. ASAD'S CONTINUING DIFFICULTIES WITH ALAWITE COMMUNITY. HE REPORTED THAT 100 ALAWITES WERE RECENTLY EXPELLED FROM LATAKIA
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BRANCH OF BAATH PARTY FOR "OPEN OPPOSITION" TO PRES. ASAD.

3. RECALLING CASE OF MUHAMMAD DUBA, ALAWITE FORMER CHIEF OF SECURITY IN ALEPPO (AND BROTHER OF MILITARY INTELLIGENCE DIRECTOR ALI DUBA) WHO RESIGNED HIS POST FOLLOWING ASSASSINATION OF HIS ASSISTANT IN LATE

DECEMBER, SOURCE SAID ALAWITE FRIEND HAS PROVIDED HIM WITH ADDITIONAL DETAILS. APPROXIMATELY SIX MONTHS AGO, DUBA TRANSMITTED TO PRES. REPORT HE HAD WRITTEN ON VARIOUS INTERNAL PROBLEMS, INCLUDING CORRUPTION AND OTHER TOPICS. REPORT REFLECTED INFORMATION DUBA HAD OBTAINED BY VIRTUE OF HIS SENSITIVE POSITION. ACCORDING TO SOURCE, REPORT WAS IGNORED, AND WHEN DUBA'S ASSISTANT MURDERED, DUBA ANNOUNCED HIS RESIGNATION AND HAS SO FAR REFUSED TO ACCEPT DIPLOMATIC OR MILITARY ATTACHE POSITION ABROAD DESPITE OFFERS FROM PRES. (NOTE: SECOND RELIABLE SOURCE REPORTED THAT VETERAN BAATH OFFICIAL HAD TALKED WITH MUHAMMAD DUBA IN DAMASCUS AND FOUND DUBA ANGRY THAT ASAD HAD ORDERED DUBA TO REFRAIN FROM INVESTIGATION OF HIS ASSISTANT'S DEATH). DISSIDENT SOURCE COMMENTED THAT ALAWITES SPREADING THIS STORY WITH SYMPATHY FOR DUBA AND WITH ANTI-REGIME OVERTONES.

4. SOURCE THEN DISCUSSED RAIQ NUQQARI AFFAIR. MOST SIGNIFICANT FACT TO EMERGE, IN HIS VIEW, WAS IMPACT OF EXISTENCE OF NUQQARI'S SECRET MILITARY ORGANIZATION ON ALAWITE OPINION. ACCORDING TO SOURCE, MANY ALAWITES SPEAK OF NUQQARI WITH PRIDE AS INDIVIDUAL WHO "REDEEMED ALAWITE HONOR" BY DEMONSTRATING THAT NOT ALL ALAWITES SUPPORT "CORRUPT ASAD REGIME". SECOND, NUQQARI EFFECTED HIS ESCAPE WITH ASSISTANCE FROM SECURITY APPARATUS. SOURCE REPORTED THAT WHEN DECISION MADE TO ARREST NUQQARI, SUPPORTER WITHIN SECURITY TELEPHONED NUQQARI'S HOME THAT SECURITY FORCES ON THEIR WAY. SOURCE SAID THAT HE UNDERSTOOD NUQQARI STILL AT LARGE, AND SAID HE HAD UNCONFIDENTIAL

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FIRMED REPORT THAT NUQQARI HAD FLED TO BAGHDAD. THIRD, SOME WEEKS AGO PRES. ASAD ABRUPTLY HALTED INTERROGATION OF SUSPECTED SUPPORTERS OF NUQQARI'S ORGANIZATION BECAUSE INCREASING NUMBER OF NAMES BEING "REVEALED" WAS BECOMING SERIOUS EMBARRASSMENT TO REGIME BY CREATING RESENTMENT TOWARD ASAD IN ALAWITE COMMUNITY AND ENHANCING IMAGE OF NUQQARI GROUP AS POPULAR MOVEMENT WITH WIDESPREAD SUPPORT.

5. SEPARATE SOURCE OF UNCERTAIN RELIABILITY REPORTED JANUARY 25 THAT AT RECENT BP REGIONAL COMMAND MEETING NUQQARI AFFAIR DISCUSSED AND TWO PROPOSALS BROACHED BY BP DEPSEC GEN AHMAR AND ANOTHER RC MEMBER REQUESTING LENIENCY FOR IMPRISONED ASSOCIATES OF NUQQARI ON PREMISE HIS ORGANIZATION NOT AIMED AGAINST PRES. ASAD BUT AT WEEDING OUT TROUBLE-MAKERS. RC VOTED TO AUTHORIZE PRES. TO RELEASE MANY OF PRISONERS. SOURCE ADDED THAT MANY DETAINEES SUBSEQUENTLY SET FREE.

6. COMMENT: EXPULSION OF ALAWITE BAATHISTS FROM PARTY FOR DISSIDENCE INDICATES SLIPPAGE IN ASAD'S SWAY OVER HIS OWN SECT AND TENDENCY AMONG ALAWITES TO MAKE THEIR DISSIDENT VIEWS KNOWN. DISAFFECTION OF MUHAMMAD DUBA FROM REGIME SUGGESTS PROBLEMS BETWEEN ASAD AND ALAWITE BASES OF BP COMPLEMENTED BY DIFFICULTIES AT SENIOR LEVELS. REPORT THAT ASAD PREVENTED INVESTIGATION OF DEATH OF DUBA'S ASSISTANT NOT YET ADEQUATELY EXPLAINED AND RASIES POSSIBILITY THAT INCIDENT RESULTED FROM INTERNAL FACTIONALISM RATHER THAN EXTERNALLY-MOTIVATED IRAQI TERRORISM. MURPHY

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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